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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/752,933	01/07/2004	Peter M. Bonutti	2500DV2CN2DV3CN8	5806

7590 03/03/2006

Patent Counsel  
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EXAMINER

THALER, MICHAEL H

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3731

DATE MAILED: 03/03/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/752,933

Applicant(s)

BONUTTI, PETER M.

Examiner

Michael Thaler

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 January 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 4-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 4-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on Nov. 30, 2005 has been entered.

Claims 1 and 4-12 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Froning (3,875,595). Froning discloses cannula 31 and a retractor including shaft 47, 48 and inflatable bladder 46 which is inherently capable of retracting opposed surfaces of a bone joint since the inflation of the bladder would inherently apply an outward pressure against the opposed surfaces to retract them. Alternatively, it would have been obvious that inflatable bladder 46 is capable of retracting opposed surfaces of a bone joint for the reasons set forth above. As to claim 4, bladder 46 is eccentrically mounted on shaft 47 as seen in figure 6. As to claim 5, any stretching of the bladder 46 will be finished when it is fully inflated. As to claim 8, portion 48 of the shaft is rigid. As to claim 10, Froning discloses a viewing scope (the cystoscope described in the abstract). As to

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claim 11, Froning discloses an interventional instrument (e.g. the instrument described in col. 2, lines 38-41).

Claims 1 and 4-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Sheldon (3,417,745). Sheldon discloses cannula 5 and a retractor (figure 4) including shaft (the combination of parts 2 and inflation channel 56) and inflatable bladder (57 or 57a) which is inherently capable of retracting opposed surfaces of a bone joint since the inflation of the bladder would inherently apply an outward pressure against the opposed surfaces to retract them. The inflatable members 57 and 57a are inherently capable of separating opposed surfaces of a bone joint since they provide outward force when they inflate, particularly since 1) they are made of Mylar which is very strong and does not stretch when inflated and 2) they are filled with liquid (the fluid in the phrase "fluid or gas" referred to in col. 8, line 68) which is substantially non-compressible. Thus, the inflatable members 57 and 57a, if located between opposed surfaces of a bone joint during inflation, would inherently provide an outward force to separate the portions of the joint. Alternatively, it would have been obvious that inflatable bladder 46 is capable of retracting opposed surfaces

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of a bone joint for the reasons set forth above. As to claim 9, portion 56 of the shaft is flexible.

Applicant's arguments filed Nov. 30, 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Inflation of the Fronging bladder 46 would inherently apply an outward pressure against the opposed surfaces to retract them since the insertion of the inflation water under pressure into the bladder (col. 3, lines 17-20) would necessarily force the walls of the bladder outwardly to expand it and any surrounding tissue, particularly since water is a substantially incompressible material.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael Thaler whose telephone number is (571)272-4704. The examiner can normally be reached Monday to Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anhtuan T. Nguyen can be reached on (571)272-4963. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571)273-8300.

mht  
2/27/06



MICHAEL THALER  
PRIMARY EXAMINER  
ART UNIT 3731